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Volume 80, Number 18

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Doug suggests that anyone who is interested in overthrowing Patriarchy Of Any Sort, Capitalist Oppressors and Cultural Hegemony should saunter over and be embraced by Him, and write for *Daily Culture*.
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17h.

MONDO editor surfs cyberpunk waves

"I come out with strong points of view that might be displeasing to big brother," says *MONDO* editor, R. U. Sirius.

Into *MONDO 2000* goes everything from "decadent anarchism" to coverage of technology, culture and hip-hop. Underlying it all, there is a strong undercurrent of cyberpunk, the psychedelic genre developed by Robert Anton Wilson and William Gibson.

The *Dailyspoke* with Sirius over the phone, from the magazine's offices in Berkeley, California.

Daily: The magazine is *MONDO 2000*, where does that name come from?

R.U. Sirius: Everyone is using the millennium to sell stuff. We had a magazine called *Reality Hackers* that didn't really ring a bell in the minds of the generic American magazine-buying public.

One night I was watching television, drunk, and there were ads for "This-2000" and "That-2000," and even some science show, "something-or-other 2000." So I went to Queen Mu, our publisher, and said, "use 2000," and she came up with *Mondo*. It means world in Italian and has kind of an association with various scatological and rather decadent movies made in the 1960s.

So it seemed to have a combination of all the right ideas and all the right resonances.

Are you a computer nerd?

No, not really. I use my computer as a word processor and networking tool. I'm not a programmer or computer hacker. I come into this as a media person and a writer, going where the revolution is.

I noticed references to Dionysus in your editorial. Is this a personal philosophy of yours, or the view of *MONDO 2000* also?

The magazine takes a fairly pro-sexual stance — to offset the nerd aspect. I think one thing that is happening, as communications and digital technology gets more and more sophisticated, is human beings are moving out of their bodies.

We offer more of a pagan vision of what the use of technology is — to enhance us and to liberate us from certain kinds of menial labour so that we have more time to fuck around.

How did you get started?

In the early '70s, I was a Yippie, with a strong media orientation, doing guerilla theatre and an underground newspaper. In the late '70s I was with a punk rock band in up-state New York. In a sense I'm the ultimate trendy, just following the waves, trying to get a little in front of them.

I came out to California in 1984 with sort of the vision of marrying various concerns — psychedelics, media, computer high technology and science. I wanted to start a sort of multimedia performance band, and I wanted to start a magazine.

Do you have a particular set of ideas you are trying to popularize through *Mondo*?

I see *Mondo* as a generalist magazine of a new territory, and that new territory could be called cyberspace. It's all that space that's not followed on the ground, but is mediated by technology and exists only in the electronic media.

The best reading material comes from unlikely sources.

Browsing through the magazine racks, you may come across a new magazine which combines a conversation between Timothy Leary and William S. Burroughs, interviews with Skinny Puppy and Digital Underground and computer software reviews.

Welcome to *MONDO 2000*. Welcome to cyberpunk.

by Eric Smiley



I think major portions of our psyche are, in a sense, post-biological. Who we are, how we define ourselves, our sexual imprints — everything is an exchange with external technology, external media.

Marshall McLuhan suggested the idea that communications technology was forming a species-wide nervous system and brain. It's reaching a point where it's beginning to mimic the brain in terms of speed of transmission between synapses. This is the vision in William Gibson's *Neuromancer*; at the end of *Neuromancer*, the communications network actually becomes a sentient being.

We're just communicating the existence of this space in *MONDO 2000*. Within that, we take a fairly anti-authoritarian position — what I call a softcore, commercial, decadent anarchism.

What sort of audience do you think you appeal to? Do you think there are any political action groups or cultural groups that are following your agenda?

We hear from a lot of people. It's going to all the heavy postmodern intellectual circles in France. Hopefully, we'll get a bunch of convoluted unreadable things written about us by people like Georges Bataille.

I don't know that there is an agenda. I know we are influencing a lot of musical groups, but it's hard to be really precise about it since we're not offering up an agenda for anybody to follow.

Actually, I might run for President, because I think the slogan "R. U. Sirius" is the only possible response to the other candidates.

Do you consider yourself an activist?

The sort of people who describe themselves as activists, I feel about as comfortable with as with a fundamental Christian. I have been an activist, and certainly I take some positions that are fairly sarcastic and outspoken.

I come into it with such a unique and individual perspective, that I don't really link up to any point of view or political group. I do come out with strong points of view that might be displeasing to Big Brother.

I noticed several interviews in *MONDO* with people talking about drugs. How do drugs fit into this whole cyberpunk thing?

I come out of a psychedelic milieu to a certain degree. I think both intelligence-increasing drugs and psychedelic experience fit in very well with the idea of a very rapidly expanded intake of information and ideas, and catching up with the speed of transmission in the media matrix.

To invent something like a thinking machine, artificial intelligence or various forms of consciousness that mimic the brain, you get a whole bunch of people who are very interested in the brain. And people who are interested in the brain, some of them at least,

wind up exploring their own.

Bruce Sterling defines cyberpunk as the bohemian culture of the computer age. In that sense there is a casual attitude towards drugs at the magazine. People that are in *MONDO 2000* are experienced, and talk about it.

How do poorer people fit into cyberspace? What about people who can't afford CD-Rom and Macs?

I think everybody is inside the culture we're talking about.

We're defining a territory that affects everybody. People in the ghetto, they're not dealing with computers, but they're dealing with effects that are created by people who use digital machinery.

Hip-hop is probably the ultimate cyberpunk expression. People with very little money getting hold of digital technology and using it to create expressions of an urban street culture.

How about the environment?

We are very interested in the use of technology as part of the solution to environmental problems. We are working right now on an article that will encourage and make people aware of how realistic and close the development of the electric car is.

Also, electronic technology provides people with a way of getting together with each other. When Virtual Reality gets to the point where it can put you in a place with somebody, it will increasingly affect people who need to travel long distances to get together.

We're moving out of the Industrial Age. Allegedly, we are in the Information and Communications Age. Eventually, we're going to go into the age of molecular technology and biotechnology, technology that mimics nature. Our science is moving back to biology — chaos theory and so forth.

How do you feel about other media?

We're into all of it right now. We're in the process of negotiating with a studio here called Colossal and they're going to try and do a *Mondo* TV special that they're going to try to sell first to the networks and then to cable, if that doesn't work. (If nothing works, then we'll have a video tape we can sell to our readers.)

Anything else?

There is a tape of a radio show we did called *Damage Control*. That was done right in the middle of the Gulf War, so it's a fairly radical statement. Michael Synergy, a major cyberpunk computer hacker, talks about how to shut down the banks and telephone system and stuff like that.

Mark Pauline talks about how to enter a city in America, using his industrial-art web to shut down the federal building, while causing the least amount of damage to human beings.

...Also, I finally got the band together which I initially intended to start. It's called *Mondo Vanilli*.

Any relation to Milli Vanilli?

Obviously. It's a loving tribute.

We have a great industrial dance version of "I Am The Walrus" — with samples from David Cronenberg's *The Fly*.

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McGill Association of International Students. General meeting. Union 435. 18h00.

Concordia Philosophy department. The advantages of Moral Diversity Loyal Campus, Bryan Building, rm

207, 20h.

WUSC. General Meeting Union 302. 17h, 286-0885.

Shakespeare!!!! Directing Shakespeare Moyse Hall 16h.

Students for Global Responsibility. Meeting Union 425/426, 18h30, 499-9138

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Photographies et Vidéoexhibit. 13h-17h Agora du Pavillon Judith Jasmin, 934-1729. Colloquium Series McGill Cognitive Science Centre McIntyre Medical Sciences Building, rm.504 16h.

Sunday, October 6

Concordia Pro-Choice Collective Demo against CQV. Metro Berri-UQAM. 13h30

Israeli Folkdance Folk dance lessons 5480 Westbury Ave. 14h. Children \$2.50 Adults \$4.00 683-4283

Women's Union Debate on Gender Neutral language. 15h. Union 423. 398-6823

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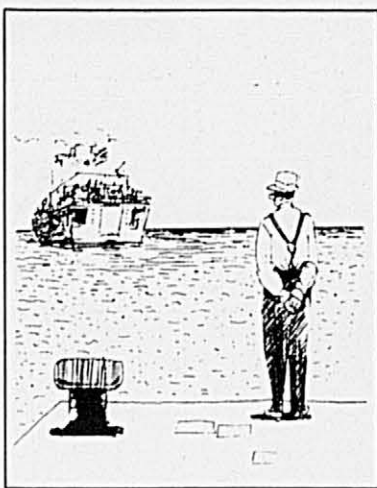
Greek mythology ferments in comic

by John Tinholt

Deadface: *Doing the Islands with Bacchus*, by Eddie Campbell. Three-issue mini-series published by Dark Horse Comics, July-September 1991, \$3.50 per issue.

Bacchus is a very old god — not in fact immortal, but long-lived. Awareness of one's own mortality runs under many stories that a dying god of sensual ecstasy might tell. And stories are what *Deadface* is all about — stories and the storyteller and of course drinking.

Deadface stories usually comprise one part actual event and at least three parts esoteric alcoholic history and classical mythology. If Bacchus is doing the telling, most of it's apochryphal anyway; even so, that's a pretty dry mix for those of us who aren't Edith Hamilton.



To keep things as off-the-cuff as Campbell's style suggests, Bacchus' sidekick Simpson, charmingly pedantic and given to quoting poetry at length, does the dirty work. Simpson lays down a human perspective on a — however sympathetic — very unhuman point of view.

For Bacchus is a cypher. He's a character hard to resist — outlaw always (especially after the 12 gods of Olympus canonized him); a drifter (necessarily, after the dissolution of same); an ironic drunk; a wise old man o' the sea in his peajacket and the nautical cap that

hides his horns; a panhandler who'll tell you he's seen better days. A pile of romantic archetypes rolled into one.

Laugh-lines and worry-lines crease Bacchus' face



into the kind of road map maze you'd expect of a 4000-year-old god of revelry. When not brooding on Bacchus' ugly mug, Campbell's ragtag of visual styles combine in an earthy melange (or is that menage?) of halftone dabs, sketchy pen-and-ink, brush line. The critic Rob Rodi (*Comics Journal* #138) describes it

as "loose and erotic."

The writing too blends formal and colloquial into sparkling brew. The stories' hodgepodge form, in short, deftly illuminates their murky interior, the narrative portrait of Bacchus himself. As Simpson says, Bacchus "represents that mysteri-

ous force in nature which we recognise to be higher than reason". Rodi concurs about the terms Campbell uses, aptly characterizing them as "almost wise."

If all this smells good to you, then, sample a glass or two of vintage Campbell: *Deadface*.



ALTERNATIVE PRESS REVIEW

They say when times are ripe for social change, underground magazines flourish. Across Eastern Europe, new rags are springing up left and right, challenging the old dogmas and spreading word of alternative thoughts.

Now is also a good time for magazines in Canada and the U.S. You may have to look under some rocks to find them, but a slew of periodicals is available to the citizen who remains unsatisfied with the Information Apparatus.

Dawn

Dawn is a new, exciting magazinal venture in Toronto's Black communities. Put out by the staff of the defunct *Contrast* community magazine, *Dawn* has come out every other week since July. Issues are about 30 pages long and include regular news in the Black communities, as well as a lot of longer articles and commentaries on various issues.

The columns are written by a wide range of writers from the community, but usually reflect a progressive line. In recent issues, columnists have debated the planned appointment of Clarence Thomas, a right-wing black man, to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The paper views the appoint-

ment with scepticism, arguing in one column that black people "must guard against the utopian notion that we can work easily together just because we are of the same racial identity."

Editor Lorna Simms says an upcoming issue of *Dawn* will focus on women and the Toronto court



system. Simms said the magazine's readership is mostly African-Canadians and recent arrivals from the Caribbean. A section of each issue is devoted to the "Caribbean File" and to news from the area.

Simms hopes to expand the paper's readership to include African people in Toronto.

Available free in Toronto. Subscost

\$60/yr for 26 issues. 21 Vaughan Rd, Toronto, M6G 2N2, 416-658-0071.

Anarchy

The subtitle of this quarterly says a lot: "A Journal of Desire Armed."

Anarchy is an amazing compilation of the contributions of active anarchists across the globulus, all pissing on and/or resisting Authority with a capital A.

The paper's libertarian principles are obvious from the length of the letters section — six out of the 36 total pages. The broadsheet also splashes together theoretical ruminations and grassroots events listings, and even the occasional dribbling by the likes of Noam Chomsky.

Anarchy's strongest point is news from various anarchistic battles around the world, most recently including fascinating material from Eastern Europe.

But they're also into developing what they call a "post-situationist, anti-ideo-

logical revolutionary tendency," which is even more confusing than it sounds, but worth decoding. Children's liberationists also get a lot of ink, including an ongoing debate on sex and children that might titillate, infuriate or astonish you.

Anarchy is put out by several members of CAL (the Columbia

Anarchist League), but the central figure is Lev Chernyi, whose sharp intellect and even-handed judgement has made him a kind of celebrity in anti-authoritarian circles.

Each *Journal of Desire Armed* costs \$3.40 in Canada. Subs are \$12 U.S. for six issues. C.A.L., P.O. Box 1446, Columbia, MO., 65205-1446. Look for the Fall issue at the *Librarie Alternatif*, 2305 St-Laurent (just below Sherbrooke), or at *Le Dernier Mot* on St-Laurent. They go fast.

This Magazine

Here's one of your more establishmentesque alternative rags. *This Magazine* is the epitome of left-liberal Canadian politics, with a strong Toronto spin.

Its strengths are developing nationalist Canadian politics and the critique of the Big Blue Agenda of

Muldoon and his crowd. Also fairly strong on mainstream feminist issues and culture Canadiana-style. The editorial board is indicative of the magazine's style. On it are national

heroine Margaret Atwood, economist Mel Watkins and the brilliant Linda McQuaig, a *Globe and Mail* business reporter.

Lately, *This Magazine* has written about free trade, Montréal's very cool political orchestra Rhythm Activism, First Nations issues and political issues in the Maritimes.

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— Alex Roslin



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La, La, La goes umph in the night

by Doug McDonald

La La La Human Steps played to 127 people in 1983, when the dance troupe performed *Businessman in the Process of Becoming an Angel*, at the Ottawa National Arts Centre. Only 77 stayed until the end.

Last Friday, they sold out Montréal's Place des Arts to the tune of \$30 a ticket.

"It looks more dangerous than it actually is," choreographer Edouard Lock told the *London Times*, when asked how his dance troupe did their dance moves in the 1987 show, *New Demons*.

"All they're likely to get is a bruise. The only thing in real danger here is the ego, because this type of dance can't go on once a mistake has been made. If the dancers get bumped, they stop. You can't fake it."

Edouard Lock's new offering, *Infante*, raises the same questions. It opened last Friday during the Festival de Nouvelle Danse. The festival continues until Saturday.

How do you do that; isn't that dangerous? Just as bizarre, just as intense, Lock sends his dancers falling in horizontal pirouettes in a technique called the "desaxe." The group's impeccable form — combined with stamping, colliding, kicking and punching — give the visual appearance of statues of Grecian gods come to life, feeling the energy of movement for the first angry time.

Anger is central in all of Lock's work, as is sexuality and guilt. *Infante* (that's destroy for all you Anglo's out there) is no exception. Many of the pieces incorporate nudity, with seemingly violent dance



moves. There are gay and straight dance pieces, but a division between the two, when watching the androgynous *La La La Human Steps*, might be an obscuring of the dance troupe's intentions.

Lock, and all the members of the troupe, share the belief that socially assigned gender roles and differences are ludicrous and should be

subjected to ridicule.

The issue of sexuality is common in many Québec dance troupes; so is the issue of the guilt you're handed for admitting you have it. Lock told the *The Globe and Mail* last week that it has a lot to do with growing up in the Duplessis era. Duplessis ran Québec for 30 years in the mid-century, aided by

the Catholic Church, and the guilt culture was strong at the time. It left its scars deep in the Québécois libido.

But Locke suggested this kind of repression was not all bad, since it gives the troupe the inspiration to do the stuff that they do today.

In one piece, dancer Louise Lecavailer, dressed as a post-indus-

trial Joan of Arc, is pierced (semioticians take note) in her left side by a long sword. At the same time, Carol Laure dances nude to the pounding electronic beat of *Skinny Puppy*.

A film of Lecavailer falling naked, is projected onto a five-story blanket of gauze at the front of the stage. And a heavy-metal guitarist plays riffs that could have closed the last *Rush* concert. Innovations are what *La La La Human Steps* is all about — and so is challenging what people think dance ought to be.

In fact, close to a third of the show was not dance at all, but film and video project, at the massive Place des Arts stage.

Lock, who discovered dance while still a film student, is looking for ways to stretch the realm of what people say is possible, and what should be categorized as dance.

In 1986 Lock was asked to choreograph Bowie's *Glass Tiger* tour. He refused, due to his own *New Demons* tour. He did give in when Bowie asked him to choreograph the *Sound and Vision* tour. As well, he won the Jean A. Chalmers Award for his 1982 *Oranges*, and New York's Bessie Award for his 1986 *Human Sex*.

Despite successes, *La La La Human Steps* remains on the edge of dance both in form and in attitude. Lock's commitment to attacking conventions of dance and sexuality, remains vanguard and critically informed.

Well, maybe the dances look dangerous. But the attitude is what'll get their legs broken.

The Festival continues until Saturday. For information call 287-1423.

Papa Ubu relies on kindness of strangers

by Carl Wilson

When American 'avant-garde' pioneers, Pere Ubu, thundered into Montréal's Fofoufoules Électriques on Friday, they were presaged by a menacing rumble over the southern horizon.

Pere Ubu is fronted by David Thomas, whose Cleveland-spawned yodel, eccentric poetics and crazed showmanship have earned him a leading place in the marginal-rock pantheon since his teenaged debut in the mid-seventies.

In the intervening years, Thomas and his virtuoso comrades have been jettisoned from one record label after another, like mad bombers out of a plane, whenever their antics weren't saleable enough for the suits in the cockpit.

But now, with perhaps their most accessible release ever, *Worlds in Collision*, the victim of a suffocation attempt by Mercury Records, Pere Ubu is mad as hell, and they won't take it anymore.

The American arm of Mercury has decided the album's chance of success is too slim to make it 'worth' promoting with tours, television appearances and the other machinery of the music biz. The situation came to a head when Ubu

was invited to appear on the David Letterman Show and Mercury refused to cover the costs.

In interviews, Thomas has emphasised that this kind of treason is a regular practice in record companies, and leads to the demise of many promising artists. But because of their history and stature, this scam wouldn't work against Pere Ubu.

A self-financed tour brought Ubu to town Friday, and amply showed why the band's worth the battle.

It was a hallucinogenic experience. Thomas's huge frame be-bopped around the stage, warbling away. His "complicated" hands gesticulated at audience and musicians alike, binding them into a spontaneous, creative community.

But at the end of the concert, Thomas had to climb down from the stage to hawk records and t-shirts, and to hand out info about Pere Ubu's plight.

We present this document now to the *Daily's* readers, to aid Pere Ubu and as a quintessential artifact of the '90s.

A statement from Ubu Projex "If you've read the NY Times, LA Times, Chicago Tribune, Rolling Stone, or seen MTV recently,

you know that Pere Ubu & its record company, Mercury Records, are in controversy.

"The decision makers at Mercury Records don't think that Pere Ubu makes 'business sense'.

"That's okay. We agree with them. We make no business sense at all. And we're proud of it.

"That's right! We like it this way. Wouldn't know a sound financial decision if it came up & bit us on the hand.

"The record industry would be a far better place to be if there were fewer people making business sense!!

"Albums are not toasters or refrigerators.

"They're hopes & fears, they're the secret poems of the heart. That's what we were brought up to believe. And now we're too pig-headed & too stupid & too set in our ways to change.

"Maybe you are too.

"We refused to abandon *Worlds in Collision*.

"So, having no business sense to fall back on, we appealed to the kindness of strangers. Donations from musicians, agents, producers and record company personnel poured in to pay the costs of appearing on the David Letterman

Show.

"All these people gave: Lou Reed, REM, The B-52s, Don Was, Jane's Addiction, Iggy Pop, Living Colour, They Might Be Giants, The Pixies, Marshall Crenshaw, Miracle Legion, The Buzzcocks, Meat Puppets, The Feelies, & the Sisters of Mercy, as well as presidents of companies & even secret contributions from Mercury employees. We are grateful to each & every one.

"So, having no business sense to warn us off, we've embarked on a tour of America without funding from Mercury Records. Foolhardy? Bound for Bankruptcy? Beating our heads against a brick wall? You bet! Oh, but that's okay. We have a plan. It's a good one. We'll rely on the kindness of strangers.

"So if it seems weird that David Thomas himself is selling the merchandise tonight, or that somebody's mom is driving the van, or that some rock celebrity is acting as Guest Roadie, don't worry. We're simply fighting the Fine Fight so that, maybe not today, or tomorrow, or even the next day after that, but someday, in a golden land not so far away, your children need never fear BUSINESS SENSE again.

"Should any of you care to add your name to the growing list of the



great & the small fighting the Fine Fight, we earnestly seek donations. Make checks payable to Ubu Projex and send them to: The Kindness of Strangers Project, c/o The Hornblow Group, 24 Hudson Avenue, Edgewater NJ 07020.

"... We've got a long road ahead before we reach our funding goal. And, you know, Mom would sure like to go home soon."

Pere Ubu will return to Montréal in November or December, touring with kind strangers the Pixies.

THE MCGILL DAILY

NOTES FROM BELOW

We'll do your dirty laundry

Can you believe what's happening at McGill these days?

Why, just the other day we were flipping through the latest issue of *The McGill News*. And there he was on the back cover, our glorious Principal David Johnson. Perched upon a gasoline can in *Foufounes Electriques*, eating a Caesar salad.

Who would have guessed Foufounes is where ol' Davester hangs out after hours?

We at the *Daily* hope the *News* never scoops us again. The next time Dave traipses off to Foufounes, or maybe the Hare Krishna restaurant, we want to be there.

But there are more important secrets we need to uncover, as well.

The way we see it, McGill University needs a kick in the pants.

McGill is famous across Canada for being one of the most mean-spirited schools in the country. Why, we can't quite say. It just so happens that McGill consistently ranks near the bottom when it comes to employee relations, open decision-making and academic policies.

Everybody has horror stories about being treated badly by administrators, about bigoted remarks by professors, and about systematic problems in certain departments which nobody seems to care about.

There are also the tales which circulate among McGill's employees about mistreatment by the university. And the stories widely discussed among T.A.'s and professors — or before the Québec Human Rights Commission.

Back in the heady '70s, some departments bowed to student pressure and experimented with hiring professors whose opinions ran counter to majority rule.

Most were fired within a few years.

Two of those professors — David Mandel and Marlene Dixon — wrote books about their experiences, both of which are fascinating reading for anyone interested in the way McGill works behind the scenes.

But nowadays many of these stories are ignored or covered up. And if they're indicative of larger problems, most members of the McGill world fear that evidence directly.

The *Daily* exists to gather that evidence, and make it available to the people who need it most. But we can't do so without inside help from students, professors, workers or anyone else who has been on the wrong end of a martlet.

We don't have to use your name in the paper. All we need is the information. We'll investigate it, get people to talk about similar situations, confront the culprits with what we know, and try to get a little accountability going around the joint.

If you've been given the run-around, the deficit blues, the shaft or the old heave-ho by somebody at this University or anywhere in Montréal, or if you just have some gossip to share, come to the *Daily* office, suite B-03 in the Student Union building on McTavish Street. Or fax us at 398-8318. Or call 398-6784, and ask to speak with an editor.

LETTERS

Gert's hurts

To the Daily:

I cannot believe what has become of our campus pub. Last Friday night some friends and I went down to Gert's expecting the good time we have always had in the past. There were eight of us ready and willing to spend a good deal of money. We were turned away at the door, not because there were too many people inside as there were only a handful, but because we were two McGill students and we had more than our allowable non-McGill guests per I.D. card carrying McGillgoer. We were told that the rules had changed with the new management. Apparently students had complained that they were waiting behind non-McGill

students. To make things worse, we are expected to sign in our guests leaving a record of our attendance at the pub including student number and the guests' name.

Now, if I'm not mistaken, the net proceeds from the pub are supposed to go to support the student union. Gert's is losing money due to these new rules and is turning away business every night. We, the students, are losing money. Unfortunately, we are losing what used to be a great campus pub as well. I wonder how these changes ever got through and how these stupid rules can be repealed.

Adam B. Singer
U2 B. Eng.

Ed. note: The letter-writer's real name was *Pierre LaRocque*, not *Pierre J. Rouge*. Sorry.

Kevin MacNeill
LLBII

Arms in air

To the Daily:

Pierre J. Rouge ("Don't believe it," Sept. 23, 1991) would have us all throw our arms up in the air and agree that everything is hopeless. He tells us not to believe anyone or anything.

So maybe, on Rouge's account, all you struggling/starving students shouldn't believe that you are suffering from higher tuition fees. Perhaps all those who suffer from deplorable racism shouldn't believe it's happening to them. Possible everyone should, above all else, take a principled stand on *nothing*.

Then again, as I suggest, perhaps we should turn a deaf ear to nihilistic post-modern nonsense. In this way we overcome a great obstacle to positive social change for the better good of ordinary people; namely, the smoke and mirrors of people that argue that there exists no objective right or wrong in the realm of politics.

Kevin MacNeill
LLBII

Concordia's example

To the Daily:

Am I the only person bothered by having to leave one class three minutes early, in order to get to the next one two minutes late? Isn't it bad enough that the tunnels don't yet connect Bronfman to Arts; does my 8.30 class have to end at 9.29.57? I don't mean to whine, but it really annoys me to show up at my 9.30 class in the middle of the lecture. (Not to mention that I usually end up sitting on the floor?)

Why does this have to be? Very simply, the teachers are supposed to lecture for 1 hour. Now, there are some teachers who dismiss class a few minutes early, but these seem to be the exception, rather than the rule.

I see two alternatives to this situation. One is to follow Concordia's example and have fifteen minute breaks between classes. Admittedly this would make the day somewhat longer, as well as making for a weird schedule. (8.30 class, 9.45 class, 11.00 class, etc ad nauseam), but it would also make our lives easier. The other choice would be to reduce class time by 10-15 minutes per period so that an 8.30 class would

end at 9.20. The catch here is that all those 10 minutes add up so that

by the end of term we'll have lost roughly six-and-a-half class hours, or a little over two weeks. How much do you want to bet we'll make up those weeks over the winter break?

Do these quasi-solutions appeal to anybody out there? Or to put it another way, would I be wasting my time if I started circulating petitions to get one of these proposals adopted? If you agree with one of the ideas stated above, or if you have one of your own, please get in touch with me.

Ellen Lackman
U1 Russian and Political
Science

Ed. note: "CW," we do print letters anonymously, but only after the writer talks to an editor about it first.



DAILY GRAPHIC: ELIZABETH LITTLEJOHN

McGill: We have the whole world in our hands

LETTERS

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Art that challenges ideas about private, public

by Kate Stewart

The 100 Days of Contemporary Art of Montréal is an exhibition of recent works of some of the most important artists in Canada, the U.S. and Europe.

The general theme of this year's exhibit is the relation between art and public space. Much of what is included in the exhibition is found outdoors and in public places.

The exhibit is presented by the Centre International d'Art Contemporain de Montréal (CIAC), and is showing into November.

• One of the most impressive works is Gilbert Boyer's *Comme un Poisson dans la Ville* of 1988, made up of a dozen marble plaques scattered throughout downtown Montréal. Its aim was to extend the practice of commemoration to his own personal vision.

• La Montagne des Jours is a collection of five granite discs which line the path of Parc Mont-Royal. The work cleverly manipulates the line between public space and private thoughts.

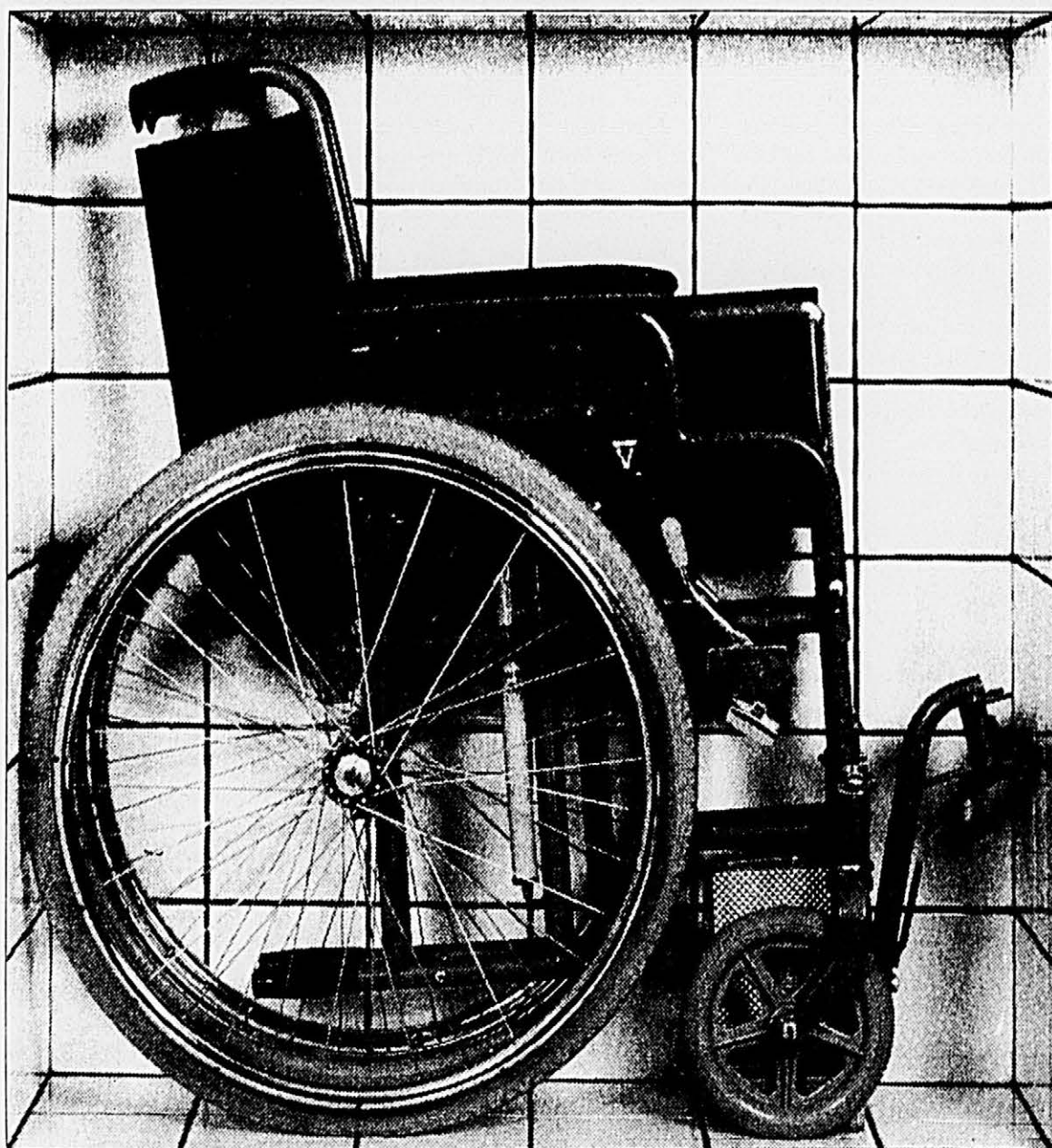
• An enormous flower pot, part of the Jean-Pierre Raynaud exhibit, marks the entrance of CIAC at the corner of Hutchison and Prince Arthur. A collection of some of his work as well as two indoor exhibits included in the 100 Days can be found here.

• JES is a collection of works by Ludger Gerdes, Dan Graham and Jeff Wall. A large proportion of this exhibit is devoted to innovative and imaginative architectural drawings and plans for public spaces.

• Visions 91 was put together in an effort to expose new directions in the visual arts in Canada. It is a presentation of 10 up-and-coming artists, mostly from Quebec.

• As part of the 100 Days, Les Jeudis des Cent Jours is a series of discussions with artists, architects and critics. Les Jeudis will also include three days of experimental films at the Goethe-Institut Montréal with Joseph Beuys.

CIAC is open from 10h to 18h, Tuesday through Sunday until November 3. Tickets are \$4 for students, \$6 for adults. For information call 288-0811.



Jean-Pierre Raynaud. *Carrelage & siège roulant*. 1990. Archives Denyse Durand-Ruel



Lorna Brown. *Affect/Affecter: détail*. 1991. photo: Lorna Brown

Independent stage production at FACE

by Glen Harris

If you happened to be listening to CBC Daybreak yesterday morning you may have heard members of Spontaneous Combustion Productions (SPC) touting their third musical extravaganza — Stephen Sondheim's *Company*.

Founded by two McGill students, James Higgins and David S. Taylor, Spontaneous Combustion Productions was created to augment the meager offerings of English theatre in Montréal. (This approach won them a spot on CFCF television program *Fighting Back*). So far, they have chosen to lead their assault with Broadway musicals.

Company was written in 1970, the first of Sondheim's works to gain prestige. (His later works, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Sunday In The Park With George*, are better known). SPC elected to present the musical as a period piece, drawing on the many allusions in the script to the post-60s way of life.

As a result, the most astounding aspect of *Company* that first strikes the audience is the realism of the costumes (skillfully assembled by Higgins's mother Rosanna). There is an absurd reality immediately created by the anachronistically clad characters. Tent-sized bell-bottoms

follow the actors across the stage, half a step behind them; swirling bright prints psychadelically animate patterned dresses. One could easily imagine Al Waxman from the King of Kensington singing and dancing alongside the other performers.

Company has not been a retro "trip" without its snags, though. The dress rehearsal was cancelled as a result of a fire on Aylmer Street a block into the ghetto behind the auditorium. FACE was evacuated and opening night became a test of the actors' wits. If this were not enough, the hall was without heat throughout a chilly first week. It has been promised that the heating system will be repaired by tonight's performance. But be prepared to hang on to your coat after you've sat down.

Still, despite these conditions, the performance is not without its warmth. *Company* is an absurdist musical dealing with the institution of marriage. The script advances without any real progression through time; rather scenes are layered upon each other, some repeated. This provides an extremely difficult task for the actors, and is handled well, for the most part.

Bobby, played by Taylor, is the

only character who develops throughout the performance, and must contend with his irritating circle of married friends. Taylor, whom McGill students will recognize from this summer's McGill Players production of *Lysistrata*, is entertaining and a pleasure to watch. But his annoying friends really do get under your skin.

Bobby is continuously followed around by a chorus singing the excruciatingly grating reprise "Bobby, Bobby Baby, Bobby Bubbi," etc. Once the characters are separated into their quaintly married couples though, their eccentricities make the viewer forget about the annoying chorus.

Harry and Sarah are obsessed by their individual fetishes, and by the repression of those fetishes; this creates the anti-Christ of the happily married couple. Paul and Amy's lack of communication and understanding is exemplified by Paul's search for lost cufflinks. "It's right next to the suicide note," Amy chimes. The more notable couples stand out as a result of their superior performances.

Susan and David smoke up with Bobby at their apartment. David is played by Peter Gal who is absolutely hilarious with his "stoned" routine.

Another outstanding performance is given by Felice Debbie Lackman. Her acting performance of Joanne is right on the mark, although her singing leaves room for improvement. Compliments to Higgins and Robin Paterson for their good insight in casting these actors in their roles.

Other memorable performances were given by Cynthia Wright who does an excellent solo dance piece during the second act, as well as the small chorus of Hank, Mary and Evelyn who appear throughout in flashy golden lamé suites. Brett Watson as Peter also sticks in my mind: he bears an uncanny resemblance to Prime Minister Pete Nice of Third Bass.

At times *Company* comes off as high schoolish, but considering that SPC is a self-sufficient non-profit organization that is only a year old (as of last month), this seems forgivable.

It should also be noted that this is the third production in that same amount of time, and SPC consists of students from either McGill university as well as local CEGEPs. Such an ambitious show is no mean feat.

The biggest drawback of the production lies in George Firth's script. Many of the situations as

well as the focus of the majority of the script is very patriarchal. Higgins admits that even the actors cringe at some of the lines, but the decision was made to present the musical as a period piece. Higgins believes there to be enough relevance about other aspects of human interaction to merit the production of this musical.

Another oddity about this production is the undeniable 70's feel of the music juxtaposed with the fact that it has all been sequenced on a computer with synthesizers and a drum machine. Originally it was planned that a live group of musicians would play. But the costs of hiring musicians would have put SPC in the red. As it is, tickets for students are \$6, for the sole reason that production costs are so high.

Nonetheless, *Company* is a spectacle worth checking out for anyone who enjoys Broadway-style musicals. Stay tuned for SPC's next production of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* this spring.

Company will run for a second week tonight, Friday and Saturday at FACE high school, just west of the McGill campus at 3449 University Street. All performances begin at 20h. For more information call 845-3910 or 695-7148.

Mekons mysticism reaches Nirvana

The Mekons The Curse of the Mekons (Blast First, 1991)

Meé-Köhn: the archvillain of pilot Dan Dare in the British comic book *The Eagle*. Not to be confused with the Mekon Delta of Vietnam lore — although the band the Mekons did get their start alongside Delta Five and Gang of Four in Leeds, during the late '70s punk boom.

And since then, without what is called in the music industry an 'interim comeback', the Mekons have delivered their own brand of adult angst music.

"For us it was all about England and the Thatcher years," Jon Langford, chief vocalist in the band, recently told reporters. "So a lot of it is pretty depressing."

True enough. But also inspiring, soothing, lyrical and mysterious in equal parts. (I almost wore out my Mekons collection during the Gulf War).

So why the title *The Curse of the Mekons* for the new album? Is it linked to the black magic theme in songs such as "Only Darkness Has the Power"? Or the eerie outdoor

shows in NYC this summer? Probably not. More likely it has to do with the improbability of the Mekons maintaining a contract with a major recording house.

Truth is, the Mekons have lost their deal with Polygram, who bought out their contract with A&M, which was bought out from Twin/Tone.

Consequently, the Mekons have no American distributor, releasing "The Curse" thru British indie label Blast First. Making it an import and extremely hard to locate here.

Once found, it delivers. The lyrics are all over the place. Even the liner jacket is full of one-liners.

"This is my testimony/a dinosaur's confession," says Langford, before a discourse on socialism, and a description of the affects of a Smart Bomb in the song "The Curse". Another song, "Secrets" tells about Nazi expatriate returning to her East German home.

Overall, the album secures its place in the long anthology of Mekon's music, but lacks some of the solid anthem sound of the past. That could be due to the loss of their rhythm section, who were fed

up with industry bullshit. Let's hope the rest of the band doesn't decide to pack it in.

Nirvana Nevermind (The David Geffen Co., 1991)

Patiently waiting for their tour with Sonic Youth to be completed before joining S.Y. at the David Geffen Record Company, Nirvana would seem to be in line for never-ending rewards.

The music on "Nevermind", is good (great). Less screaming than their precious support release, and only slight tracers of guitar make way for a sound rhythm section.

"Smells Like Teen Spirit" almost qualifies as anthem Sons, and "Breed" moves fast.

Have no fear if you missed them and the guitar flying thru the smoke from the second level at Foufoune's a couple of weeks ago. You'll probably be hearing their songs over and over all winter long.

Fugazi Steady Diet of Nothing (Discharge Records, 1991)

It seems Fugazi's main man, Ian Mackaye, is loosing his grip on the



punk wail's heart.

"Depitition" is the key word here.

Thanks to Dutchy's for providing these records for review.

— Don Friberg

Would you buy a used illusion from these fellows?

Use Your Illusion I Use Your Illusion II Guns N' Roses (Geffen Records)

That goes for all you punks in the press

That want to start shit by printin' lies...

Fuck you! Suck my fuckin' dick!
You wanta antagonize me?
Antagonize me, motherfucker!
Get in the ring, motherfucker!
And I'll kick your bitchy little ass,
Punk!

— "Get In The Ring"

The new Guns N' Roses record, if you haven't guessed.

Juvenile, pathetic, and kind of amusing, all at the same time. Pretty much what you were expecting, right?

But hey. Flip to a song called "Estranged", near the end of *Use Your Illusion II*.

"Estranged" is Guns N' Roses' stab at a "Kashmir" for the 1990s. It's a 10-minute ballad that heaves and churns, but deliberately refuses to cut loose and soar. The soloing by guitarist Slash is breathtaking—but truncated, fighting its own momentum.

After all, the lyrics are about a love that could never quite take off. So the song doesn't either. It gives you just enough beauty to tug at your heart. The rest of the emotional canvas you have to fill in for yourself, which won't be too difficult if you know how a breakup tastes.

Hmmm... not quite what you were expecting?

In short, if this is a band that



delights in living down to its snotty reputation, it's also one that consistently defies your preconceptions.

Appetite for A Sequel

To this point, the Guns N' Roses phenomenon has been based mostly on 1987's *Appetite for Destruction*. A harsh, electrifying debut record, *Appetite* had some of the force and street-authenticity of the best rap music. It rubbed your face

in what it was like to be strung out in L.A.: hounded, hungry, horny.

Today's Guns N' Roses is a different act in several ways. The most significant change is that, for all the vitriol spewed around on *Use Your Illusion*, everybody in the band is now rich and pampered as can be.

This is more than a little problematic. *Appetite*'s anger burned with the snarling intensity of the underdog. But what do you get teed off about, when the world is falling at your feet?

Your detractors, maybe. Guns N' Roses have spent the last four years mired in almost constant controversy: allegations of racism, homophobia, misogyny, etc.

A lot of the criticism can be tied to the band's own dumb actions. There are, though, plenty of people who can't be bothered to look any deeper into a song like the notorious "One In A Million", and have instead set up a death watch, waiting for Guns N' Roses to implode.

Apart from the sophomoric "Get In The Ring", critics get their due on the coolly persuasive "Don't Damn Me".

"I put the pen to the paper 'cos it's all a part of me," Axl Rose sings. "My words may disturb, but at least there's a reaction." Still, you can only take so many sucker-punches at your opponents without slipping over into self-referential navel-gazing. Consider Public Enemy.

Another thing these rich kids are pissed about is (surprise, surprise) certain women. There's nothing approaching a formal statement of misogyny, and the love songs lend some balance. Still, setting up yet another one-sided round in the battle of the sexes seems a little tired as a lyrical strategy.

The anger often comes across more as wounded petulance: the kind of emotion for which the phrase "Grow up!" was invented.

Return of the Killer 70s

Seems Guns N' Roses now have it all, and they're finding it a little hard to write about. That aside, it can't be denied that their new re-

lease — an astonishing two-and-a-half hours of music spread over two double albums — is a real feast of swaggering, often searing rock and roll.

Use Your Illusion is final proof, if any were needed, that the '90s are taking their lead from the much-maligned 1970s.

"Dust N' Bones" is the most rollicking song Aerosmith never wrote. The huge, greasy riff on "Coma" echoes classic Deep Purple. Axl Rose's vocals hark back to Robert Plant on occasion, and his piano playing is Elton John through-and-through. Alice Cooper even turns up for a growly guest vocal on "The Garden".

Guns N' Roses have also clearly been paying attention to musical trends over the last four years. There's a manic speed-metal edge to "Perfect Crime" and "Garden of Eden", a sleek Metallica-like precision to the stop-and-start rhythms of "Locomotive".

And just to round out the package, Axl throws a real curveball: an 85-second rap ("My World"), which sounds like an outtake from the last Faith No More album.

Rose, by the way, demonstrates time and again here that he is the finest, most versatile vocalist hard rock has ever produced. Moving effortlessly from the agonized hush of "Estranged" to the full-throttle wowl of "You Could Be Mine", he makes everyone else seem shrill and one-dimensional by comparison.

— Adam Jones

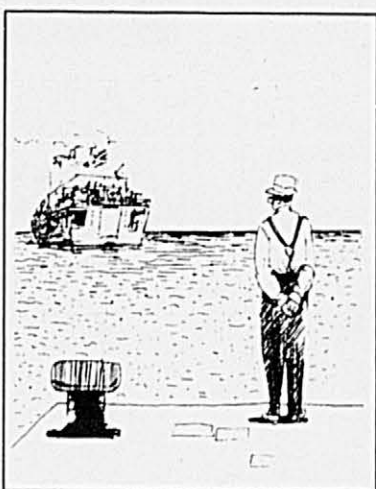
Greek mythology ferments in comic

by John Tinho

Deadface: *Doing the Islands with Bacchus*, by Eddie Campbell. Three-issue mini-series published by Dark Horse Comics, July-September 1991, \$3.50 per issue.

Bacchus is a very old god — not in fact immortal, but long-lived. Awareness of one's own mortality runs under many stories that a dying god of sensual ecstasy might tell. And stories are what *Deadface* is all about — stories and the storyteller and of course drinking.

Deadface stories usually comprise one part actual event and at least three parts esoteric alcoholic history and classical mythology. If Bacchus is doing the telling, most of it's apocryphal anyway; even so, that's a pretty dry mix for those of us who aren't Edith Hamilton.



To keep things as off-the-cuff as Campbell's style suggests, Bacchus' sidekick Simpson, charmingly pedantic and given to quoting poetry at length, does the dirty work. Simpson lays down a human perspective on a — however sympathetic — very unhuman point of view.

For Bacchus is a cypher. He's a character hard to resist — outlaw always (especially after the 12 gods of Olympus canonized him); a drifter (necessarily, after the dissolution of same); an ironic drunk; a wise old man o' the sea in his peajacket and the nautical cap that

hides his horns; a panhandler who'll tell you he's seen better days. A pile of romantic archetypes rolled into one.

Laugh-lines and worry-lines crease Bacchus' face



into the kind of road map maze you'd expect of a 4000-year-old god of revelry. When not brooding on Bacchus' ugly mug, Campbell's ragtag of visual styles combine in an earthy melange (or is that menage?) of halftone dabs, sketchy pen-and-ink, brush line. The critic Rob Rodi (*Comics Journal* #138) describes it

as "loose and erotic."

The writing too blends formal and colloquial into sparkling brew. The stories' hodgepodge form, in short, deftly illuminates their murky interior, the narrative portrait of Bacchus himself. As Simpson says, Bacchus "represents that mysteri-

ous force in nature which we recognise to be higher than reason." Rodi concurs about the terms Campbell uses, aptly characterizing them as "almost wise."

If all this smells good to you, then, sample a glass or two of vintage Campbell: *Deadface*.



ALTERNATIVE PRESS REVIEW

They say when times are ripe for social change, underground magazines flourish. Across Eastern Europe, new rags are springing up left and right, challenging the old dogmas and spreading word of alternative thoughts.

Now is also a good time for magazines in Canada and the U.S. You may have to look under some rocks to find them, but a slew of periodicals is available to the citizen who remains unsatisfied with the Information Apparatus.

Dawn

Dawn is a new, exciting magazinal venture in Toronto's Black communities. Put out by the staff of the defunct *Contrast* community magazine, *Dawn* has come out every other week since July. Issues are about 30 pages long and include regular news in the Black communities, as well as a lot of longer articles and commentaries on various issues.

The columns are written by a wide range of writers from the community, but usually reflect a progressive line. In recent issues, columnists have debated the planned appointment of Clarence Thomas, a right-wing black man, to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The paper views the appoint-

ment with scepticism, arguing in one column that black people "must guard against the utopian notion that we can work easily together just because we are of the same racial identity."

Editor Lorna Simms says an upcoming issue of *Dawn* will focus on women and the Toronto court



system. Simms said the magazine's readership is mostly African-Canadians and recent arrivals from the Caribbean. A section of each issue is devoted to the "Caribbean File" and to news from the area.

Simms hopes to expand the paper's readership to include African people in Toronto.

Available free in Toronto. Subscost

\$60/yr for 26 issues. 21 Vaughan Rd, Toronto, M6G 2N2, 416-658-0071.

Anarchy

The subtitle of this quarterly says a lot: "A Journal of Desire Armed."

Anarchy is an amazing compilation of the contributions of active anarchists across the globe, all pissing on and/or resisting Authority with a capital A.

The paper's libertarian principles are obvious from the length of the letters section — six out of the 36 total pages. The broadsheet also splashes together theoretical ruminations and grassroots events listings, and even the occasional dribbling by the likes of Noam Chomsky.

Anarchy's strongest point is news from various anarchistic battles around the world, most recently including fascinating material from Eastern Europe.

But they're also into developing what they call a "post-situationist, anti-ideological revolutionary tendency," which is even more confusing than it sounds, but worth decoding. Children's liberationists also get a lot of ink, including an ongoing debate on sex and children that might titillate, infuriate or astonish you.

Anarchy is put out by several members of CAL (the Columbia

Anarchist League), but the central figure is Lev Chernyi, whose sharp intellect and even-handed judgement has made him a kind of celebrity in anti-authoritarian circles.

Each *Journal of Desire Armed* costs \$3.40 in Canada. Subs are \$12 U.S. for six issues. C.A.L., P.O. Box 1446, Columbia, MO., 65205-1446. Look for the Fall issue at the Librarie Alternatif, 2305 St-Laurent (just below Sherbrooke), or at Le Dernier Mot on St-Laurent. They go fast.

This Magazine

Here's one of your more establishmentesque alternative rags. *This Magazine* is the epitome of left-liberal Canadian politics, with a strong Toronto spin.

Its strengths are developing nationalist Canadian politics and the critique of the Big Blue Agenda of

Muldoon and his crowd. Also fairly strong on mainstream feminist issues and culture Canadiana-style. The editorial board is indicative of the magazine's style. On it are national heroine Margaret Atwood, economist Mel Watkins and the brilliant Linda McQuaig, a *Globe and Mail* business reporter.

Lately, *This Magazine* has written about freetrade, Montreal's very cool political orchestra Rhythm Activism, First Nations issues and political issues in the Maritimes.

\$2.95 will buy you one issue. A year's subscription is \$19.50 (8 issues). 35 Riviera

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— Alex Roslin



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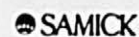
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CLASSIFIEDS

Ads may be placed through the Daily business office, Room B-17, Union Building, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students (with valid ID): \$3.50 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$2.50 per day. McGill Employees (with staff card) \$4.50 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$3.50 per day. All others: \$5.00 per day, or \$4.00 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. (Prices do not include applicable GST or PST). For more information, please visit our office in person - WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damage due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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